

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 389

August 10, 1995, 9:30 p.m.
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DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS/\$3.2 Billion Cut

SUBJECT: Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996 . . . S. 1087. Stevens motion to table the Wellstone amendment No. 2404.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 56-42

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1087, the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996, will appropriate \$242.7 billion for the military functions of the Department of Defense for fiscal year 1996, which is \$6.4 billion more than requested and \$2.3 billion less than the fiscal year (FY) 1995 funding level.

The Wellstone amendment would reduce total appropriations by \$3.2 billion and would require the savings to be used for deficit reduction.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Stevens moved to table the Wellstone amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

We oppose the Wellstone amendment for the same reasons that we opposed the Kohl amendment last week (see vote No. 364) and for the reasons we intend to vote against the pending Kerry motion as well. The Senate should not decide spending levels based upon the level requested by the President. The President can and should make suggestions, but, for every area of spending, it is Congress' constitutional duty to decide exactly how much to appropriate and for what line items. In the area of defense, Congress has even more of an explicit duty to decide, because the Constitution provides that "Congress shall have the Power To * * * raise and support Armies * * * To provide and maintain a Navy; To make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces; To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections, and repel Invasions." We take our constitutional responsibilities seriously. We will never serve as a rubber-stamp for the President on any spending. The Wellstone amendment simply says give the President half of what he wants; the Constitution, though, does not say that the President

(See other side)

YEAS (56)			NAYS (42)			NOT VOTING (2)	
Republicans (50 or 94%)	Democrats (6 or 13%)		Republicans (3 or 6%)	Democrats (39 or 87%)		Republicans (1)	Democrats (1)
Abraham	Inhofe	Heflin	Brown	Akaka	Harkin	Mack- ²	Bradley- ⁴
Ashcroft	Jeffords	Inouye	Grassley	Baucus	Hollings		
Bennett	Kassebaum	Johnston	Hatfield	Biden	Kennedy		
Bond	Kempthorne	Lieberman		Bingaman	Kerry		
Burns	Kyl	Nunn		Boxer	Kerry		
Campbell	Lott	Robb		Breaux	Kohl		
Chafee	Lugar			Bryan	Lautenberg		
Coats	McCain			Bumpers	Leahy		
Cochran	McConnell			Byrd	Levin		
Cohen	Murkowski			Conrad	Mikulski		
Coverdell	Nickles			Daschle	Moseley-Braun		
Craig	Packwood			Dodd	Moynihan		
D'Amato	Pressler			Dorgan	Murray		
DeWine	Roth			Exon	Pell		
Dole	Santorum			Feingold	Pryor		
Domenici	Shelby			Feinstein	Reid		
Faircloth	Simpson			Ford	Rockefeller		
Frist	Smith			Glenn	Sarbanes		
Gorton	Snowe			Graham	Simon		
Gramm	Specter				Wellstone		
Grams	Stevens						
Gregg	Thomas						
Hatch	Thompson						
Helms	Thurmond						
Hutchison	Warner						

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

has half the power of the purse, half the power to raise and support armies, or half-power in any of the other areas enumerated above.

Senators should use their own minds to decide if the spending in this bill that was not requested by President Clinton is advisable. First, the President requested two DDG-51 destroyers. By the year 2000, the Department of Defense's master plan is to have 15 such destroyers. The Appropriations Committee decided not to spread out the purchases as much as planned by President Clinton in order to achieve economies of scale; it called for 4 destroyers next year. The savings from purchasing 4 ships in 1 year instead of purchasing 4 ships in separate years will be \$1.4 billion. Another large appropriation that was added by the Committee is for the LHD-7 amphibious ship. After debating this issue on a previous amendment, nearly three-fourths of Senators found the need for this ship to be compelling. Our colleagues, by going back to the President's budget, would be saying that the Senate's opinion does not matter--the President should decide defense spending. A third major addition is \$777 million in funding for Guard and Reserves procurement. President Clinton requested a pittance, knowing full well that Congress would increase his request. Considering this President's willingness to use military forces around the world, considering his steady downsizing of those forces, and considering the resulting increased reliance on reserve forces, one may conclude that it was not very charitable to fail to call for any procurement items for the reserves. Perhaps the President wanted to have lower overall budget numbers; whatever his motivation, we are not about to fail to provide the equipment that the Guard and Reserves need. Other additions include funding for FNA-18 aircraft, F-15s, and F-16s. Again, the purpose is to meet high priorities with large purchases in order to achieve economies of scale. Next, the appropriators added \$300 million to accelerate development of a national missile defense system. We have had several votes on that issue. Do our colleagues believe we were voting on something that was not for us to decide? Do they believe we should have just deferred to the President? The other additions are for the Coast Guard, the Comanche helicopter, and hurricane aircraft.

All of the additions were made to this bill because the appropriators thought they were needed. Many of those additions have been endorsed in subsequent votes by the whole Senate. This bill has not been larded up with pork, but if it were, it would be the constitutional duty of Senators to strike out those items with which they disagreed. They were not elected to hand the defense budget over to the President. The Wellstone amendment should therefore be rejected.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

The Wellstone amendment is a follow-up amendment to the Kohl amendment that was offered last week to the defense authorization bill. All of our arguments in favor of that amendment are the same as the arguments in favor of this amendment. The vote on the Kohl amendment was close but it was rejected. We hope that the Wellstone amendment will fare better for one simple reason--it compromises. The Kohl amendment would have reduced the authorization level to the level requested by the President. The Wellstone amendment, though, would not reduce appropriations by \$6.4 billion to the level requested by the President; instead, it would split the difference, and ask for a \$3.2 billion cut. We hope that this more modest amendment will meet with the approval of a majority of our colleagues.